Judge Upholds CIA on Agee Papers

By Joe Pichirallo
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A U.S. District Court judge has upheld the Central Intelligence Agency's refusal to release thousands of documents to former agent Philip Agee and has criticized provisions of the Freedom of Information Act that forced the government to spend more than $400,000 on Agee's request.

Judge Gerhard A. Gesell, in a written opinion, said that many of the documents Agee sought involved the CIA's "legitimate efforts to ascertain and counteract [Agee's] effort to subvert the country's foreign intelligence program."

"It is amazing that a rational society tolerates the expense, the waste of resources [and] the potential injury to its own security" that resulted from the agency's attempt to comply with Agee's request for documents under the act, Gesell said.

Agee, 47, who resigned from the agency in 1968, has made a career of exposing the names of CIA personnel and attacking the agency's methods.

Gesell's criticism is similar to that voiced by CIA officials who have long used the Agee case to bolster their request for changes in the act.

Agee is attempting to get the CIA documents to support his allegations that the agency's investigation into his activities has been improper, according to his lawyer, Melvin L. Wulf.

Wulf, who is considering an appeal of Gesell's ruling, said the cost to the CIA of processing Agee's request was incidental to the rights of an individual in a free society. "That's what the government is there for, to work for the people," he said.

Gesell said that the CIA spent more than $327,000 in staff salaries and $74,750 in computer costs processing Agee's request. Agee got only about 500 of the 8,699 documents the agency has on him.

Gesell held that the CIA acted properly when it withheld most of them under the act's exemptions for national security matters.

He also ruled that the CIA was not required to give Agee a more specific description of the documents it withheld.

Protest at Dog Track Ends in Several Arrests

SEABROOK, N.H., July 20 (AP) —About 500 people rallied outside a dogtrack to protest Sunday greyhound racing, and police arrested several town officials.

The march at Yankee Greyhound dog track Sunday was the second protest in two weeks. The Sunday opening law—twice rejected by Seabrook voters who have said they want one quiet day each week—was approved by the state legislature on July 1.

All were charged with disorderly conduct, police said.